

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 04605 081447Z

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ACTION SMI-01

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R 081346Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3814

UNCLAS CAIRO 4605

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SCUL, EG, US

SUBJECT: GOE GIFT TO KENNEDY CENTER

REF: CAIRO 0015

1. DURING APRIL 6 MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR, EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES DIRECTOR GAMAL MOKHTAR RAISED QUESTION OF PROPOSED GOE GIFT TO KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS. THIS SUBJECT HAS APPARENTLY BEEN UNDER DISCUSSION FOR SOME TIME BETWEEN KENNEDY CENTER PRINCIPALS AND EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR ASHRAF GHORBAL.

2. DURING TRIP TO USA LAST FALL, MOKHTAR SAID HE MET WITH KENNEDY CENTER OFFICIALS AND WITH AMBASSADOR GHORBAL TO DISCUSS MOST APPROPRIATE GIFT FOR CENTER. AT THAT TIME IT WAS DECIDED THAT TWO ITEMS MIGHT BE DONATED, THE FIRST AN ALABASTER VASE FROM THE KING ZOSER PERIOD (ABOUT 5,000 YEARS OLD AND STANDING ABOUT 90 CM HIGH) AND THE SECOND A TOMB RELIEF CASTING DEPICTING MUSICIANS AND/OR DANCERS. THE VASE POSES LITTLE PROBLEM SO FAR AS SUITABILITY IS CONCERNED, BUT THE CASTING PROJECT WILL REQUIRE SOME RATHER PRECISE PLANNING FOR EXECUTION AND, OF COURSE, CAREFUL SELECTION FROM AMONG MORE THAN 100 SCENES OF MUSICIANS AND DANCERS WHICH MIGHT BE USED. THE SELECTION OF THE CASTING WILL DEPEND LARGELY UPON THE SPACE DESIGNATED FOR DISPLAY IN THE KENNEDY CENTER.

3. DR. MOHKTAR AND AMBASSADOR GHORBAL ARE BOTH ANXIOUS TO SETTLE DETAILS FOR GIFT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. IN THIS CONNECTION, MOKHTAR HAS ASKED THAT A RESPONSIBLE PERSON, EITHER FROM THE KENNEDY CENTER STAFF, OR FROM ANOTHER SUTIALBLE INSTITUTION, UNCLASSIFIED

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VISIT CAIRO SOON TO FINALIZE SELECTION. IT IS PARTICULARLY

IMPORTANT THAT SUCH A DESIGNEE KNOW INTENDED EXHIBIT PLANS FOR THE TWO PIECES INCLUDING, IN CASE OF CASTING, DIMENSIONS OF DISPLAY AREA.

4. SINCE THESE DISCUSSIONS HAVE APPARENTLY BEEN UNDERWAY FOR SOME TIME, EMBASSY WOULD HOPE TO RESPOND TO MOKHTAR'S REQUEST AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. REQUEST DEPARTMENT COORDINATE WITH AMB. GHORBAL AND KENNEDY CENTER OFFICIALS TO ARRANGE FOR APPROPRIATE EXPERT TO VISIT CAIRO FOR FINAL SELECTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. PLEASE ADVISE.
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